THINKING LIKE A DESIGNER
Topics
Topics

- Welcome to Game Design
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- Welcome to Game Design
- You Are a Game Designer!
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- Welcome to Game Design
- You Are a Game Designer!
- Bartok: A Game Design Exercise
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- Welcome to Game Design
- You Are a Game Designer!
- Bartok: A Game Design Exercise
- The Definition of *Game*
Welcome to Game Design
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- Welcome to Introduction to Game Design, Prototyping, and Development
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  - Game Design: The iterative process of crafting interactive experiences for players
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- This book and these lectures cover all three topics as well as many other supporting topics that will make you a better game designer
Welcome to Game Design
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- Do game designers need to know how to program?
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- **Do game designers need to know how to program?**
  - Some designers, like Chris Hecker (Spy Party) feel that designers *must* know how to program
  - Other very successful designers like Nicholas Fortugno (Diner Dash) are not programmers at all
  - So, what do you think?
Welcome to Game Design
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- This is why it was so important for IGDPD to cover design, prototyping, and development
  - Though they are not strictly necessary, both prototyping and development will make you a more effective and more capable game designer
You Are a Game Designer!
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- As of this moment, you are a game designer...
You Are a Game Designer!

- As of this moment, you are a game designer…
- and I want you to say it out loud!
You Are a Game Designer!

- As of this moment, you are a game designer…
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I am a game designer.
You Are a Game Designer!
You Are a Game Designer!

- Why am I asking you to do this?
You Are a Game Designer!

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- According to Robert Cialdini's book, *Influence: The Art of Persuasion*, people are more likely to follow through if they state out loud that they will do so.
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- Say it one more time:
You Are a Game Designer!

- Why am I asking you to do this?
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- Say it one more time:

I am a game designer.
You Are a Game Designer!
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- But, this class is actually teaching you to design more than just games
You Are a Game Designer!

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- The techniques you learn in this class will teach you to design *any* kind of interactive experience:
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- The techniques you learn in this class will teach you to design _any_ kind of interactive experience:
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- The techniques you learn in this class will teach you to design *any* kind of interactive experience:
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You Are a Game Designer!

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- The techniques you learn in this class will teach you to design *any* kind of interactive experience:
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- You're more than just a game designer
You Are a Game Designer!

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- You're more than just a game designer

I am an experience designer.
You Are a Game Designer!
You Are a Game Designer!

- You've said it three times now
You Are a Game Designer!

- You've said it three times now
- To reinforce it even more, you can post it to Facebook or another social network
You Are a Game Designer!

- You've said it three times now
- To reinforce it even more, you can post it to Facebook or another social network
- The more people that you tell you are a game designer, the more likely you are to follow through!
You Are a Game Designer!

- You've said it three times now
- To reinforce it even more, you can post it to Facebook or another social network
- The more people that you tell you are a game designer, the more likely you are to follow through!
- Now that you're a game designer, it's time for your first game design exercise
Bartok: A Game Design Exercise
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- Bartok is a classic card game that is similar to the commercial game *Uno*
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  - Remove the Jokers from the deck
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- All you need to play are three to five players and a standard deck of playing cards
  - Break into groups of 3-5 players each
  - Remove the Jokers from the deck
  - Shuffle the cards
Bartok: A Game Design Exercise
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- Objective
Bartok: A Game Design Exercise

- Objective
  - Be the first person to run out of cards
Bartok: A Game Design Exercise

- **Objective**
  - Be the first person to run out of cards

- **Standard Rules:**
Bartok: A Game Design Exercise

- **Objective**
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- **Standard Rules:**
  - Deal 5 cards to each player
Bartok: A Game Design Exercise

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    - The remaining cards become a draw pile
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  - Flip over the top card of the draw pile to start a discard pile
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  - The person to the left of the dealer plays first, and play proceeds clockwise
  - Each player must play a card onto the discard pile that matches the suit or number of the top card of the discard pile.
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  - Flip over the top card of the draw pile to start a discard pile
  - The person to the left of the dealer plays first, and play proceeds clockwise
  - Each player must play a card onto the discard pile that matches the suit or number of the top card of the discard pile.
  - If she can’t, she must draw a card.
The player can choose to play any one of the cards highlighted with blue borders (7C, JC, 2H, 2S).
Bartok: Asking the Right Questions
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- Analysis
Bartok: Asking the Right Questions

- Analysis
  - Is the game of the appropriate difficulty?
Bartok: Asking the Right Questions

- Analysis
  - Is the game of the appropriate difficulty?
  - Is the outcome of the game based more on strategy or chance?
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  - Does the game have meaningful, interesting decisions?
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  - Is the game of the appropriate difficulty?
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  - Is the game interesting when it's not your turn?
Bartok: Modifying the Rules
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- Each group should pick a number (1 – 3)
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Based on the number, add the following rule to the game:
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- Based on the number, add the following rule to the game:
  - **Rule 1**: If a player plays a 2, the person to her left must draw two cards instead of playing.
Bartok: Modifying the Rules

- Each group should pick a number (1 – 3)
- Based on the number, add the following rule to the game:
  - **Rule 1**: If a player plays a 2, the person to her left must draw two cards instead of playing.
  - **Rule 2**: If any player has a card that matches the number and color (red or black) of the top card, she may announce "Match card!" and play it out of turn. Play then continues with the player to the left of the one who just played the out-of-turn card. This can lead to players having their turns skipped.
Bartok: Modifying the Rules

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- Based on the number, add the following rule to the game:
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  - **Rule 3:** A player must announce “Last card” when she has only one card left. If someone else calls it first, she must draw two cards (bringing her total number of cards to three).
WATCH OUT FOR PLAYTESTING FLUKES
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- You must playtest several times to ensure that you experience an average playtest and not a fluke.
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- You must playtest several times to ensure that you experience an average playtest and not a fluke
- However, you must also note any flukes that happen because they can also happen to players
Bartok: Asking the Right Questions
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- How did the single rule change the game?
Bartok: Asking the Right Questions

- How did the single rule change the game?
- Have the answers to your questions changed?
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- Discuss the changes to these answers for each of the three rules
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  - Does the game have meaningful, interesting decisions?
  - Is the game interesting when it's not your turn?
- Discuss the changes to these answers for each of the three rules
- Changing a single rule can have a drastic affect on the feel of the game!
Bartok: Making Your Own Rules
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- Now, how do you want the game to feel?
Bartok: Making Your Own Rules

- Now, how do you *want* the game to feel?
- Try designing a rule to make the game feel more like this specific emotion.
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Bartok: Making Your Own Rules

- Now, how do you *want* the game to feel?
- Try designing a rule to make the game feel more like this specific emotion
  - Change only one rule at a time
  - Test with the new rule and see how it feels
Now, how do you want the game to feel?

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  - You don't need to complete an entire game if the rule really doesn't feel right
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- Now, how do you *want* the game to feel?
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  - Change only one rule at a time
  - Test with the new rule and see how it feels
    - You don't need to complete an entire game if the rule really doesn't feel right
  - Work with your group to make the game your own
Bartok: Discussion
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- What game feel was your team seeking?
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- What rule(s) did your team create?
- How well did they work?
The Definition of Game
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- We'll explore each one in turn
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  - However, some open games have other goals
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    - Players are complicit in the decisions of the character and therefore better understand the feelings of the game character
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  - The first of our *designer's goals* (see Chapter 8)
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- Second designer's goal: interesting decisions
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  - **Formal elements**: The elements that differentiate a game from other types of media
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  - **Formal elements**: The elements that differentiate a game from other types of media
  - **Dynamic systems**: Methods of interaction that evolve as the game is played
  - **Conflict structure**: The ways in which players interact
  - **Uncertainty**: The interaction between randomness, determinism, and player strategy.
Tracy Fullerton's Definition

"A game is a closed, formal system that engages players in a structured conflict and resolves its uncertainty in an unequal outcome" – Tracy Fullerton, *Game Design Workshop* (2008)

- Not only a definition of *game*, but also a list of elements that designers can modify
  - **Formal elements**: The elements that differentiate a game from other types of media
  - **Dynamic systems**: Methods of interaction that evolve as the game is played
  - **Conflict structure**: The ways in which players interact
  - **Uncertainty**: The interaction between randomness, determinism, and player strategy.
  - **Unequal outcome**: How does the game end? Do players win, lose, or something else?
Jesse Schell's Definition

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- Third designer's goal: *lusory attitude*
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- Burgun attempts to restrict the definition to make it easier to understand the bounds of the field
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  "Something can be accepted as a chair provided it is properly made for sitting on, whether it consists of a plastic balloon, a large blob of foam, or a basket slung from the ceiling. Provided you understand the need you can see whether it has the right characteristics, and aptness for that need is what chairs have in common" – Mary Midgley, "The Game Game" (1978)
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  - You should also read the source material for all of these definitions to expand your understanding of game design
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